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THANKSGIVING MESSAGE TO HOMEMAKERS.

A radio talk by Dr. C. B. Smith, Office of Cooperative Extension Work, broadcast Wednesday, November 7, 1934, in the Home Demonstration radio program, National Farm and Home Hour.

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The crop year of 1934 in the United States has been an unusual one. The worst drought in 50 years visited some sections of the Central West. In large portions of a number of these States not an ear of corn was produced, gardens were cut to the ground by blistering winds, streams and water holes dried up, wells failed, cattle and sheep had to be moved by thousands of trainloads to distant pastures. Over great areas, crops failed utterly.

And yet, in these very areas, the majority of farm families have something for which to be thankful. Most of them had accepted the Federal Government's plan of production control and secured partial payments on adjustment of their normal volume of production of crops and livestock. The destructive effects of the drought on the farms in drought areas have thus been eased to some degree by this government crop insurance plan. In many cases, these benefit payments have constituted the farmer's only source of income. This is a government activity never attempted before and came in the nick of time to help ameliorate a great regional tragedy. That is something for which to be thankful.

In sections of the country where normal or approximately normal crops have been produced, the farm family have seen the prices of what they had to sell substantially advanced. The year's income has been considerably increased over last year's. The farmer is getting nearly a dollar a bushel for his wheat on the farm, 11 to 12 cents a pound for his cotton. Corn, barley, and oats are bringing good prices. Hogs have advanced in price substantially. The average income of these farm families for the sale of crops and livestock products in 1934 has increased approximately 19 percent over 1933. This increased income has reflected itself in more things for the home and family. That is also something for which to be thankful; but it is probably not the biggest thing for which the farm family may be thankful.

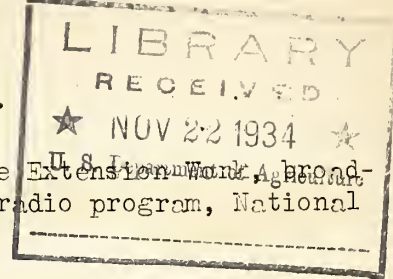
One of the biggest and most blessed things in the world is work-- constructive, creative, worth-while work. Today, while 10,000,000 men and women sit or stand in idleness because industry lags, 32,000,000 farm folks have constructive work to do, work that gives them hope and keeps them sane, wholesome, and forward-looking.

Besides that, practically all farm people have shelter, a place to live where rent is lower than anywhere else. Most of them have wood or coal to keep them warm and something to eat. Few real farm families are in need of charity as far as food is concerned. Where they are in such need, it is only temporary, caused by drought or other disaster, and will pass with the coming of another growing season.

In times of depression, it is the farm family that is in the most strategic position. Stocks and bonds may depreciate in value and wipe out the savings of a lifetime, but the family that has land has something whereby they can make a living. As farm men and women, let's not forget that in this day of thanksgiving.

These are confusing times. There is much mist all about us, but we are trying out things. We are on our way and have faith that a people who formed of themselves a nation in still more troublous times than these, and preserved that nation

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till now, will continue its preservation and maintain its greatness throughout the future.

We can be thankful today that we live in a country where it is the intent of the people so to order their government that all shall have some work to do, all have some income, and all some leisure -- leisure in which to enjoy the fruits of their labor and have time to read, to study, to play, to be a neighbor, and to grow mentally and spiritually.

Times are getting better. There will be turkey and ham; chicken; pumpkin, apple, and sweet potato pies on the tables of a good many million homes on Thanksgiving Day. There will be home gatherings everywhere.

In our rejoicing may we not forget the man and woman without a job, the home without income, and may every one of us who has something, even though it be little, share that little with those who have less, and in the sharing remember it is not so much the gift as what lies in the heart of the giver that counts. Let's each one of us help make Thanksgiving a real day of rejoicing for ourselves, our family, and the man and woman who temporarily has less. And so good-bye.